

**President Pro Tempore Senator Ted Stevens Offers Eulogy
In Honor Of President Ronald Reagan**

Today, Senator Ted Stevens, President Pro Tempore of the United States Senate, joined Vice President Dick Cheney and Speaker of the House Dennis Hastert in receiving the remains of President Ronald Wilson Reagan to the United States Capitol Rotunda, where he will lie in state until Friday morning.

During the ceremony Senator Stevens offered this eulogy of our nation's 40th President.

MRS. REAGAN, PATTI, RON, MICHAEL, DISTINGUISHED GUESTS, MEMBERS OF THE REAGAN FAMILY, AND FRIENDS OF RONALD REAGAN IN AMERICA AND THROUGHOUT THE WORLD:

TONIGHT, PRESIDENT RONALD REAGAN HAS RETURNED TO THE PEOPLE'S HOUSE TO BE HONORED BY MILLIONS OF AMERICANS WHO LOVED HIM.

SINCE 1824, UNDER THIS ROTUNDA, OUR NATION HAS PAID FINAL TRIBUTE TO MANY DEDICATED PUBLIC SERVANTS. PRESIDENT ABRAHAM LINCOLN WAS THE FIRST PRESIDENT TO LIE IN STATE UNDER THIS CAPITOL DOME. IN THE COMING DAYS, THOUSANDS WILL COME TO THESE HALLOWED HALLS TO SAY GOOD-BYE TO ANOTHER SON OF ILLINOIS WHO, LIKE LINCOLN, APPEALED TO OUR BEST HOPES, NOT OUR WORST FEARS.

IN THE LIFE OF ANY NATION, FEW MEN FOREVER ALTER THE COURSE OF HISTORY. RONALD REAGAN WAS ONE OF THOSE MEN. HE ROSE FROM A YOUNG BOY WHO DIDN'T HAVE MUCH TO A MAN WHO HAD IT ALL, INCLUDING THE LOVE OF A FAITHFUL PARTNER AND FRIEND HE FOUND IN HIS WIFE NANCY.

THE TRUE MEASURE OF ANY MAN IS WHAT HE DOES WITH THE OPPORTUNITIES LIFE OFFERS. BY THAT STANDARD, RONALD REAGAN WAS ONE OF AMERICA'S GREATEST. HE FIRST PROVED THAT AS GOVERNOR OF CALIFORNIA AND LATER AS THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

WHEN RONALD REAGAN WAS SWORN IN AS OUR 40TH PRESIDENT, THIS NATION WAS GRIPPED BY A POWERFUL MALAISE, INFLATION AND UNEMPLOYMENT WERE SOARING, AND THE SOVIET UNION WAS WINNING THE COLD WAR.

BY THE TIME PRESIDENT REAGAN LEFT OFFICE, HE HAD REVERSED THE TREND OF EVER-INCREASING GOVERNMENT CONTROL OVER OUR LIVES, RESTORED OUR DEFENSE CAPABILITIES, GUIDED US THROUGH THE WORST ECONOMIC DOWNTURN SINCE THE GREAT DEPRESSION, AND SET

IN MOTION POLICIES WHICH ULTIMATELY LED TO THE COLLAPSE OF THE “EVIL EMPIRE.”

HIS INTEGRITY, VISION AND COMMITMENT WERE RESPECTED BY ALL. BUT HISTORY’S FINAL JUDGMENT, I BELIEVE, WILL REMEMBER MOST HIS ABILITY TO INSPIRE US.

PRESIDENT REAGAN PUT IT BEST WHEN HE SAID: “THE GREATEST LEADER IS NOT NECESSARILY THE ONE WHO DOES THE GREATEST THINGS. HE IS THE ONE THAT GETS [THE] PEOPLE TO DO THE GREATEST THINGS.”

THIS PRESIDENT INSPIRED AMERICANS BY REACHING OUT FAR BEYOND WHAT HE COULD ATTAIN. LIKE A GOOD COACH, HE UNDERSTOOD THE VALUE OF A GOAL ISN’T ALWAYS IN ACHIEVING IT; SOMETIMES IT IS ENOUGH TO SIMPLY LOOK OUT INTO THE FUTURE AND REMIND PEOPLE WHAT IS POSSIBLE. AND, OFTEN HE ACHIEVED THE IMPOSSIBLE.

HE REMINDED US THAT “GOVERNMENT IS NOT THE SOLUTION.” THE SOLUTION LIES IN EACH OF US. TRUE AMERICAN HEROES ARE ORDINARY PEOPLE WHO LIVE THEIR LIVES WITH EXTRAORDINARY CHARACTER AND STRENGTH.

PRESIDENT REAGAN SHOWED US FREEDOM WAS NOT JUST A SLOGAN; HE ACTUALLY BROUGHT FREEDOM TO HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE AROUND THIS GLOBE BY OPPOSING OPPRESSIVE REGIMES. THOSE OF US FROM THE WORLD WAR II GENERATION LOOKED UP TO HIM FOR HIS MORAL COURAGE; IN HIM WE SAW THE LEADERSHIP OF GREAT MEN LIKE EISENHOWER WHO LED THE WAY AND MOVED US TO FOLLOW.

ON A WINTER DAY IN 1981, RONALD REAGAN STOOD ON THE STEPS THAT LIE JUST BEYOND THESE DOORS TO DELIVER HIS FIRST INAUGURAL ADDRESS. HE SPOKE OF A JOURNAL WRITTEN BY A YOUNG AMERICAN WHO WENT TO FRANCE IN 1917 AND DIED FOR THE CAUSE OF FREEDOM. FROM THAT JOURNAL HE READ THESE WORDS:

“I WILL WORK, I WILL SAVE, I WILL SACRIFICE, I WILL ENDURE, I WILL FIGHT CHEERFULLY AND DO MY UTMOST, AS IF THE ISSUE OF THE WHOLE STRUGGLE DEPENDED ON ME ALONE.”

THROUGHOUT HIS LIFE, RONALD REAGAN BORE OUR BURDENS AS IF THE OUTCOME DID DEPEND ON HIM ALONE. WE WILL ALL REMEMBER HIM AS AN UNPARALLELED LEADER AND AN EXCEPTIONAL MAN WHO LIFTED OUR NATION AND SET THE WORLD ON A NEW PATH.

PRESIDENT REAGAN ACHIEVED GREATNESS IN HIS LIFE; SOME MIGHT EVEN ARGUE HE TRANSCENDED IT. HE COULD NOT HAVE ACCOMPLISHED

THIS WITHOUT NANCY. NANCY IS ONE OF THE FINEST FIRST LADIES THESE UNITED STATES HAVE EVER KNOWN. AND THE LOVE RONALD AND NANCY REAGAN SHARED TOUCHED THE HEARTS OF PEOPLE EVERYWHERE.

IN 1989, PRESIDENT REAGAN DELIVERED HIS FAREWELL ADDRESS FROM THE OVAL OFFICE. IN THAT SPEECH, THE PRESIDENT SPOKE OF “THE SHINING CITY UPON A HILL” THAT, “AFTER 200 YEARS, TWO CENTURIES ...STILL STANDS STRONG AND TRUE ON THE GRANITE RIDGE.” NOW, IT IS OUR TURN TO THANK RONALD REAGAN FOR MAKING US BELIEVE IN THAT SHINING CITY. AS WE SAY FAREWELL, HIS LAST WORDS AS PRESIDENT ECHO ACROSS THIS GREAT NATION. IF WE LISTEN, WE WILL HEAR HIM WHISPER THE HUMBLE WORDS HE USED TO SUM UP HIS REVOLUTION:

“ALL IN ALL, NOT BAD, NOT BAD AT ALL.”

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**Speaker's Remarks at the State Funeral Of the
Late President Ronald Wilson Reagan**

June 8 , 2004

(Washington, D.C.) The Speaker of the House, J. Dennis Hastert (R-IL) made the following remarks at the State Funeral of the late President Ronald Wilson Reagan tonight in the Capitol Rotunda:

“Mrs. Reagan, Mr. Vice President, Members of Congress, Distinguished Guests: Ronald Reagan’s long journey has finally drawn to a close.

“It is altogether fitting and proper that he has returned to this Capitol Rotunda, like another great son of Illinois, Abraham Lincoln, so the nation can say, good-bye. “This Capitol Building is, for many, the greatest symbol of democracy and freedom in the world.

“It brings to mind the ‘shining city on a hill’ of which President Reagan so often spoke. It is the right place to honor a man who so faithfully defended our freedom, and so successfully helped extend the blessings of liberty to millions around the world.

“Mrs. Reagan, thank you for sharing your husband with us—for your steadfast love and for your great faith. We pray for you and for your family in this time of great mourning. “But as we mourn, we must also celebrate the life and the vision of one of America’s greatest Presidents.

“His story and values are quintessentially American.

“Born in Tampico, Illinois, and then raised in Dixon, Illinois, he moved west to follow his dreams. He brought with him a Midwestern optimism, and he blended it with a western ‘can do’ spirit.

“In 1980, the year of the ‘Reagan Revolution,’ his vision of hope, growth, and opportunity was exactly what the American people needed and wanted. His message touched a fundamental chord that is deeply embedded in the American experience.

“President Reagan dared to dream that America had a special mission. He believed in the essential goodness of the American people—and that we had a special duty to promote peace and freedom for the rest of the world.

“Against the advice of the timid, he sent a chilling message to authoritarian governments everywhere, that the civilized world would not rest—until freedom reigned—in every corner of the globe.

“While others worried, President Reagan persevered. When others weakened, President Reagan stood tall. When others stepped back, President Reagan stepped forward. And he did it all with great humility, with great charm, and with great humor.

“Tonight, we will open these doors and let the men and women who Ronald Reagan served so faithfully, file past and say good-bye to a man who meant so much to so many.

“It is their being here that I think would mean more to him than any words we say.

“Because it was from America’s great and good people that Ronald Reagan drew his strength.

“We will tell our grandchildren about this night when we gathered to honor the man from Illinois who became the son of California and then the son of all America.

“And our grandchildren will tell their grandchildren—and President Reagan’s spirit and eternal faith in America will carry on.

“Ronald Reagan helped make our country and this world a better place to live. But he always believed that our best days were ahead of us, not behind us.

“I can still hear him say, with that twinkle in his eye, ‘You ain’t seen nothing yet!’

“President Reagan once said, ‘We make a living by what we get; we make a life by what we give.’

“Twenty years ago, President Reagan stood on the beaches of Normandy, to honor those who made a life, by what they gave.

“Recalling the men who scaled the cliffs and crossed the beaches in a merciless hail of bullets, he asked, who were these men—these ordinary men doing extraordinary things?

“His answer was simple and direct: They were Americans.

“So I can think of no higher tribute or honor or title to confer upon Ronald Reagan than to simply say: He was an American.

“Godspeed, Mr. President.

“God bless you, and God bless the United States of America.”

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REMARKS BY THE VICE PRESIDENT AT THE
STATE FUNERAL OF RONALD W. REAGAN

Washington, D.C.
U.S. Capitol Rotunda

June 9, 2004

7:55 P.M. EDT

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Mrs. Reagan, members of the President's family, colleagues, distinguished guests, members of the diplomatic corps, fellow citizens:

Knowing that this moment would come has not made it any easier to see the honor guard, and the flag draped before us, and to begin America's farewell to President Ronald Reagan. He said goodbye to us in a letter that showed his great courage and love for America. Yet for his friends and for his country, the parting comes only now. And in this national vigil of mourning, we show how much America loved this good man, and how greatly we will miss him.

A harsh winter morning in 1985 brought the inaugural ceremony inside to this Rotunda. And standing in this place for the 50th presidential inauguration, Ronald Reagan spoke of a nation that was "hopeful, big-hearted, idealistic, daring, decent, and fair." That was how he saw America, and that is how America came to know him. There was a kindness, simplicity, and goodness of character that marked all the years of his life.

When you mourn a man of 93, no one is left who remembers him as a child in his mother's arms. Ronald Wilson Reagan's life began in a time and place so different from our own, in a quiet town on the prairie, on the 6th of February, 1911. Nelle and Jack Reagan would live long enough to see the kind of man they had raised, but they could never know all that destiny had in store for the boy they called Dutch. And if they could witness this scene in 2004, their son taken to his rest with the full honors of the United States, they would be so proud of all he had done with the life they gave him, and the things they taught him.

President Reagan once said, "I learned from my father the value of hard work and ambition, and maybe a little something about telling a story."

That was the Ronald Reagan who confidently set out on his own from Dixon, Illinois during the Great Depression, the man who would one day speak before cameras and crowds with such ease and self-command. "From my mother," said President Reagan, "I learned the value of prayer. My mother told me that everything in life happened for a purpose. She said all things were part of God's plan, even the most disheartening setbacks, and in the end, everything worked out for the best." This was the Ronald Reagan who had faith, not just in his own gifts and his own future, but in the possibilities of every life. The cheerful spirit that carried him forward was more than a disposition; it was the optimism of a faithful soul, who trusted in God's purposes, and knew those purposes to be right and true.

He once said, "There's no question I am an idealist, which is another way of saying I am an American." We usually associate that quality with youth, and yet one of the most idealistic men ever to become president was also the oldest.

He excelled in professions that have left many others jaded and self-satisfied, and yet somehow remained untouched by the worst influences of fame or power. If Ronald Reagan ever uttered a cynical, or cruel, or selfish word, the moment went unrecorded. Those who knew him in his youth, and those who knew him a lifetime later, all remember his largeness of spirit, his gentle instincts, and a quiet rectitude that drew others to him.

Seen now, at a distance, his strengths as a man and as a leader are only more impressive. It's the nature of the city of Washington that men and women arrive, leave their mark, and go their way. Some figures who seemed quite large and important in their day are sometimes forgotten, or remembered with ambivalence. Yet nearly a generation after the often impassioned debates of the Reagan years, what lingers from that time is almost all good. And this is because of the calm and kind man who stood at the center of events.

We think back with appreciation for the decency of our 40th president, and respect for all that he achieved. After so much turmoil in the '60s and '70s, our nation had begun to lose confidence, and some were heard to say that the presidency might even be too big for one man. That phrase did not survive the 1980s. For decades, America had waged a Cold War, and few believed it could possibly end in our own lifetimes. The President was one of those few.

And it was the vision and will of Ronald Reagan that gave hope to the oppressed, shamed the oppressors, and ended an evil empire. More than any other influence, the Cold War was ended by the perseverance and courage of one man who answered falsehood with truth, and overcame evil with good.

Ronald Reagan was more than an historic figure. He was a providential man, who came along just when our nation and the world most needed him. And believing as he did that there is a plan at work in each life, he accepted not only the great duties that came to him, but also the great trials that came near the end. When he learned of his illness, his first thoughts were of Nancy. And who else but Ronald Reagan could face his

own decline and death with a final message of hope to his country, telling us that for America there is always a bright dawn ahead. Fellow Americans, here lies a graceful and a gallant man.

Nancy, none of us can take away the sadness you are feeling. I hope it is a comfort to know how much he means to us, and how much you mean to us as well. We honor your grace, your own courage, and above all, the great love that you gave to your husband. When these days of ceremony are completed, the nation returns him to you for the final journey to the West. And when he is laid to rest under the Pacific sky, we will be thinking of you, as we commend to Almighty the soul of His faithful servant, Ronald Wilson Reagan.

END

8:00 P.M. EDT